



Disability Inclusion

ACTION PLAN



PORT STEPHENS
COUNCIL

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Mayoral message

Port Stephens Council is pleased to present its Disability Inclusion Action Plan, which replaces the Port Stephens Disability Action Plan (2014-2018) and aligns with the Disability Act 2014.

This document recognises the commitment that Port Stephens Council has to an inclusive and accessible community for all people, and it defines actions (both direct and indirect) that will encourage and enhance inclusion.

We are committed to disability inclusion and to building a community where everyone is able to easily access opportunities, and to connect and fully participate in their community.

I would like to thank everyone from our community who contributed their time, ideas and opinions during the development of this Plan; these ongoing connections and partnerships are vital in the ongoing development of a more inclusive community where all people are supported to participate fully.

This Disability Inclusion Action Plan will be reviewed regularly and reported on annually. Council is committed to ensuring the Action Plan is implemented and that this document remains an important focus for our community now and into the future.

Ryan Palmer
Mayor Port Stephens



Executive summary

The Port Stephens Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) outlines Council's commitment to support the right of choice for people with a disability and to live their lives with access to opportunities and to enjoy the benefits of living and working in our society as all residents do.

Development of the DIAP has given Council an opportunity to focus on enriching Council's commitment to creating a place that is more inclusive, accessible, and provides opportunities for all abilities and backgrounds.

Port Stephens Council consulted extensively with people in the local government area who have a disability, their families, carers and disability groups to identify challenges, barriers and issues for inclusion. The consultation process enabled discussion and feedback, and provided ideas and suggestions for change and improvement.

Stakeholder priorities were established through external consultation as well as mapping of existing Council functions, services and assets to identify potential opportunities to achieve a more inclusive and accessible society. Community consultation and mapping outcomes were then analysed to identify actions. A further risk management process was undertaken, before incorporating appropriate actions into existing Port Stephens Council Integrated Plans.

The implementation of these actions will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure disability inclusion is given appropriate

consideration, including in other plans, policies and procedures.

This DIAP is underpinned by Council's policies, programs and regulatory responsibilities, including a commitment to social justice principles which are integrated within the Integrated Planning and Reporting framework (IP&R). Port Stephens Integrated Plans encompass the Community Strategic Plan 2013-2023, the Delivery Program 2013-2017 and the Operational Plan 2016-2017.

The DIAP and actions within it are framed around four focus areas. These areas were developed during development of the NSW Disability Inclusion Plan by people with a disability. These focus areas and actions are outlined below will be delivered through Council's Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework:

1. Liveable communities (including physical access to buildings and facilities, and transport);
2. Attitudes and behaviours;
3. Supporting access to meaningful employment; and
4. Improving access to services through better systems and processes (which is about availability and accessibility of information regarding services).

In line with the Disability Inclusion Act 2014, the Port Stephens DIAP will be reported on annually to the Minister for Disability. Furthermore, Council will review the disability inclusion action planning process every four years as a minimum.



Live their lives, access opportunities and enjoy the benefits of living and working in our society as all residents do.

Background

Port Stephens Local Government Area (LGA) is in the Hunter Region of New South Wales within the Port Stephens and Great Lakes Marine Park. It is approximately two hours drive north of Sydney and 30 minutes from Newcastle. In 2016, Port Stephens had a population of 64,807 at the 2016 Census. This figure is predicted to rise by up to 23,000 over the next 15 years.¹

Port Stephens has grown as a regional centre with a mix of coastal and rural villages, and larger regional centres, including coastal centres, which presents a diverse range of opportunities for everyone in the LGA.

The proportion of people who experience disability can be correlated to Need for Assistance (Has need for assistance with core activities) census data. In Port Stephens, the proportion of people who identify as having a Need for Assistance in Port Stephens is 6.4% of the population. Comparatively, NSW has 5.37% of the population and the Hunter notes 6.39% who identify as having a Need for Assistance.

Council is already a direct provider of services for people with a disability and their carers through:

- Leasing of the Ngioka Centre to the Endeavour Foundation, who will provide disability support services under the NDIS scheme;
- Leasing of the Grahamstown Dam Aquatic Reserve to Sailability;
- Provision of Wheel in Wheel Out garbage bin service;

- Provision of programs for children with additional needs at Outside School Hours Care (Raymond Terrace, Medowie), Port Stephens Activity Van and Family Day Care;
- Provision of large print books, talking books and audit and visual navigation aids from libraries (Raymond Terrace, Salamander Bay, Mobile Library); and
- Provision of equipment at Aquatic Centres that enable safe entry into and out of heated swimming pools.

Council owns and maintains a large asset portfolio that includes the following asset classes:

- Civil assets (bridges, depots, drainage, pathways);
- Road pavements;
- Transport facilities;
- Waste facilities; and
- Community and recreation assets (aquatic centres, cemeteries, libraries, multipurpose facilities, childcare centres, parks and reserves, playgrounds, public amenities, skate parks, sport facilities, surf lifesaving clubs, waterways).

Mapping of functions, services and assets (Appendix 3) enables identification of assets and services with potential to contribute to achievement of a more inclusive society.

Council provides opportunities for partnerships and volunteering in the care and management of community facilities, parklands and in public services.

¹ Retrieved www.portstephens.nsw.gov.au

² Source: www.portstephenscouncil.nsw.gov.au/volunteering

Volunteer opportunities are available in areas such as:

- Halls and community centres;
- Parks, reserves and Landcare groups;
- Cemetery committees;
- Sports council and clubs; and
- Advisory and cultural groups and libraries (among others).²

This DIAP defines strategies and provides a planning framework and actions to promote inclusion and equity for people with a disability, so they may fully participate in, and contribute to, social, business and community life. The DIAP will enhance and complement the existing services provided by Port Stephens Council and will encourage an ongoing focus on building a socially inclusive and accessible place for all.



Port Stephens Council will encourage an ongoing focus on building a socially inclusive and accessible place for all.





Guiding principles

The community vision for the Port Stephens Community Strategic Plan is to have “a great lifestyle in a treasured environment”. This vision can only truly be achieved in a society that is inclusive and accessible for people of all abilities and backgrounds.

This Plan is critical to achieve positive change and create a more inclusive society. A more inclusive society is diverse, stronger and more sustainable.

To achieve this, the following principles underpin and reinforce the actions and desired outcomes within the DIAP and align with the philosophy behind the *NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014*, the Community Strategic Plan and the communities vision:

- Social justice principles of:
 - Equity
 - Access
 - Participation
 - Rights
- Guiding principles for Councils in accordance with Chapter 3 of the *Local Government Act 1993*, which are summarised below:
 - Strong and effective representation, leadership, planning and decision making;
 - Carry out its functions in a way that provides best possible outcomes for the local community;
 - Plan strategically within the integrated planning and reporting framework for present and future populations
 - Working with others to secure appropriate services for local community needs; and
 - Fairly, ethically and without bias in the interests of the local community;
- Business Excellence principles:
 - Port Stephens Council applies the Business Excellence principles to inform continuous improvement and strengthen the organisations ability to deliver more efficient and effective services to the community.



Inclusive communities where individuals can fully participate in social, business and community life.

Policy and legislative context

Definition

The Disability Inclusion Act 2014 defines disability as: 'The long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairment, which in interaction with various barriers may hinder the full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others'.

In the context of the DIAP, 'disability' includes functional impairments or limitations, which may be present from birth, acquired by accident or illness or due to the process of ageing. The impairments may be substantial or seemingly minor, temporary or permanent.

Legislation

In 1993, all NSW government departments and some other government bodies were required to undertake disability action planning when the NSW Disability Services Act 1993 (DSA) was introduced.

In 2008, the Australian Government committed to implementing the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

In 2014, a strengthened commitment to inclusion, better consultation with people with disability and protection of their rights was propelled with the introduction of the Disability Inclusion Act 2014, which replaced the DSA.

There is a suite of further Commonwealth and State legislation that promotes and drives improving access and inclusion for people with a disability:

INTERNATIONAL

- Principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of People with a Disability

COMMONWEALTH

- Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Australian Government NDIS Act 2013
- Australian Government Aged Care (Living Longer Living Better) Act 2013

NSW

- NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014

The most recent legislation and amendments reflect a shift towards the view that, while a disability may affect the way that a person interacts with others and their environment, it should not define a person and it should not limit their capacity to become an integral part of the community. Although the rights of a person with a disability have been defined as the same rights as those of all people since the early 1990s, it is understood that upholding these rights must include promotion of individual choice about what is important to them, universal access to services and facilities and inclusive communities where individuals can fully participate in social, business and community life.

The *NSW Disability Inclusion Act 2014* promotes the view that 'inclusion' is not only a goal for service providers and public and private sector organisations, it is a responsibility of the whole community. It legislates for the rights of people with a disability to full participation in every-day life, with enhanced community connection, independence, empowerment and wellbeing. It is the role of local government through a *Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP)* to promote and support inclusion in their communities.

ADDITIONAL LEGISLATION

- *Carers (Recognition) Act 2010 (NSW)*
Disability not only affects people who have a disability, but also people who care for them. The Carers (Recognition) Act 2010 acknowledges the significance of carers, including respect and recognition, inclusion in decision making and access to services they may need.
- *Local Government Act 1993*
The Local Government Act 1993 sets out the framework and responsibilities of Councils and provides guidance to enable council's to carry out their functions in a way that facilitates local communities that are strong, healthy and prosperous.



Draw together diverse interests and strive towards attaining greater consensus on sustainable outcomes for the local government area.



Council's responsibilities and roles

Role of council

New South Wales (NSW) is entering a new era in disability inclusion planning. Council's role in implementation of the DIAP will include as a direct service provider, as a leader, an advocate and facilitator.

- **As leader:** Council acts as a role model for others, through its own actions, strategic organisational responses and way of doing things. In its dialogue with the communities and other stakeholders, Council can act to draw together diverse interests and strive towards attaining greater consensus on sustainable outcomes for the local government area.
- **As advocate:** Council seeks to improve services, facilities and opportunities for the local government area and its communities by lobbying agencies and other levels of government. In discussions with others, there are opportunities to reinforce Port Stephens sense of identity and resilience, and collaborate on achieving a more sustainable local government area.
- **As facilitator:** Council assists interaction amongst stakeholders, and forms strategic alliances aimed at promoting sustainability initiatives focussing on elements including social, economic, environmental,

cultural and governance, which demonstrate positive ways of moving forward.

- **As service provider:** Council has a strong commitment to delivering the services needed by its communities, and ensuring that Council resources are responsibly managed. Council's role as a service provider aims to assist in building the long-term health of the local government area.

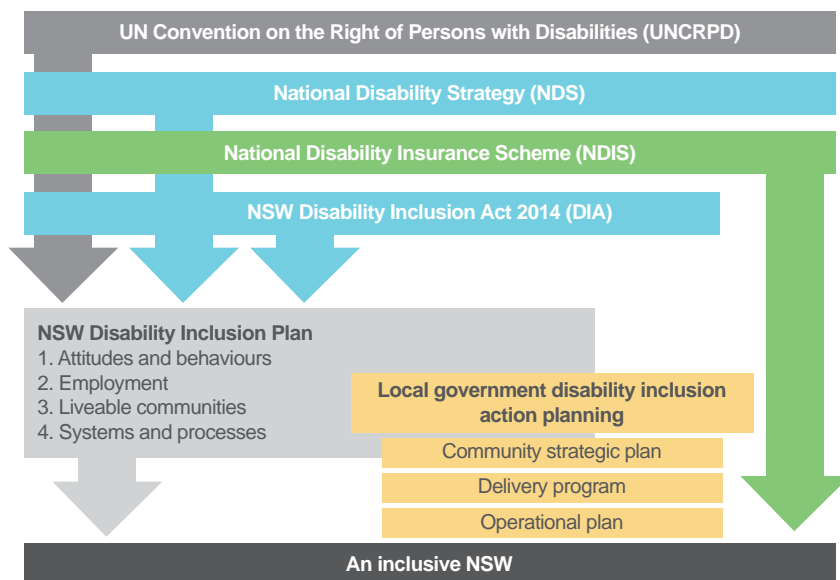
Executive responsibility and project coordination

Port Stephens Council supports the development and implementation of the DIAP. The General Manager has responsibility to oversee the various functions/groups of Council.

The DIAP will be coordinated by the Social Planning Unit within the Strategy and Environment section of the Development Services team. Responsibility for implementation and resourcing of the DIAP will be across all sections of Council.

Integrated planning and reporting

Goals and strategies of Port Stephens Council are underpinned by five themes which provide focus and direction for the Integrated Planning and Reporting (IPR) framework. The four focus areas for the DIAP may be positioned within those five focus areas of Integrated Planning framework.



Port Stephens CSP-themes

CSP1 Our citizens

CSP2 Our lifestyle

CSP3 Our environment

CSP4 Our economy

CSP5 Our Council

Focus Areas for DIAP

- Liveable communities, Focus Area 2
- Positive community attitudes and behaviours, Focus Area 1
- Liveable communities, Focus Area 2
- Liveable communities, Focus Area 2
- Supporting access to meaningful employment, Focus Area 3
- Improving access to services through better systems and processes, Focus Area 4



Document review

As background to the consultation and to confirm issues which have been previously identified in the Port Stephens LGA, a review of documents was undertaken. Council has a suite of documents, which reflect their commitment to an inclusive and connected society in an environment that facilitates opportunities for contribution by all those who live in the Port Stephens Region. Reviewed documents included:

- Port Stephens Integrated Plans incorporating:
 - Community Strategic Plan 2013-2023
 - Delivery Program 2013-2017,
 - Operational Plans 2016-2020
- Port Stephens Strategic Asset Management Plan (2016-2026)
- Port Stephens Disability Action Plan 2014-2018
- NSW Disability Inclusion Action Planning Guidelines.

Consultation and engagement

According to 2016 census data the population of Port Stephens was 69,556, which is an increase of 4,746 or 7.32% from 2011 (64,810). As the table below notes there are distinct differences in the proportion of people who stated a Need for Assistance between each of Port Stephens planning catchments. However, community

consultation with people who experience a disability, their families, carers and disability groups show that the barriers, challenges and needs of people with a disability to fully participate in community life are similar throughout the LGA.

Need for Assistance

Suburb	2006	2011	2016
Fern Bay	7.4%	8.7%	7.89%
Karuah / Swan Bay	5.3%	8.3%	8.59%
Medowie	3.2%	3.5%	3.93%
Raymond Terrace	5.2%	6.3%	7.75%
Rural East	5.3%	4.7%	6.11%
Rural West	2.9%	3.1%	3.07%
Tilligerry	6.4%	7.3%	7.97%
Tomaree	5.5%	5.5%	6.53%
Port Stephens LGA	5.0%	5.5%	6.40%

Consultation with the community

In seeking to fully understand and identify the barriers to inclusion and access, and to find solutions; information was sought from key stakeholders. Key stakeholders are people within the Port Stephens community who identify as experiencing a disability, their carers' and support workers.

A survey was completed and distributed within the community from November

2016 to January 2017. The period of the survey was extended over the Christmas period/school holiday period. 71 surveys completed surveys were received from the community.

The following table sets out who and how the survey was distributed to key stakeholders.

Stakeholder	Engagement Processes
Council website	Surveys could be accessed through Council's website using Engagement HQ
Council Facebook page	A link to the survey was placed on Council's Facebook page. The link was 'boosted' which meant the page connected anyone in the LGA who had clicked on anything to do with disability, which significantly broadened the surveys reach.
MyLink Group	Advice and information about the DIAP, including a link to the survey was distributed to Councils MyLink group. MyLink is an email group of members including Not for Profit Groups and Non-Government Organisations (NGO's), such as disability service and support providers. The MyLink email group keeps its members informed of upcoming meetings, local events, professional development opportunities and other important information. Notifications of updates are sent to the MyLink email list weekly.
Libraries	Paper copies of the surveys were provided to the Tomaree and Raymond Terrace Libraries for distribution to disability groups (including disability support groups) who use the library
Media release	Media release in the Port Stephens Examiner and online version of the Port Stephens Examiner
Schools	Every school in the LGA was contacted via telephone and the survey and link distributed via email. Schools then placed the information about the survey and the link in school community newsletters and on Facebook pages.
Eagleton Ridge Respite Centre	Eagleton Ridge Respite Centre was contacted and information forwarded about the survey, along with a link
Flyer	Flyers were developed to help promote the project, which contained information about the survey and where to access it. Flyers were delivered to doctors surgeries, disability service providers and Council run pools.
Internal stakeholder meeting	Internal stakeholder meeting and ongoing consultation to go over elements of the DIAP.

Summary of priorities

Returned surveys and consultation meetings presented a clear picture of priorities with suggestions and solutions. Looking across all questions in the survey, the following outlines the most important priorities for the Port Stephens community.

1. Footpaths/ramps
2. Accessibility to events/activities, shops, sporting and recreation facilities, and parks
3. Provision of venues, services, events
4. Public toilets
5. Parking
6. Public transport
7. Public education
8. Respectful and inclusive community and services.

Some of the priorities for the community in the consultation for the DIAP were also identified in the Port Stephens Disability Action Plan 2014-2018. Furthermore, the Port Stephens Integrated Plans aims to “make future provisions for people with disabilities, their families and carers” via several actions, including implementing the Disability Inclusion Action Plan.

Results of the community consultation were arranged in to the DIAP’s four focus groups and actions were developed that align with these areas. These focus areas were identified as part of extensive community consultation during development of the NSW Disability Inclusion Plan. As such these focus areas became a requirement to be in all NSW agency DIAPs. These actions recognise the rights of people with a disability to full and effective participation in an inclusive society; the same as those without a disability. The following action plan outlines Council’s role and action and priority level.



Results of the community consultation were arranged into the DIAP’s four focus groups and actions were developed that contribute a more inclusive, accessible and liveable society.



Action planning

Liveable Communities

Item for improvement	Priority Time-frame	Coun- cil Role	Action	Outcome	IPR Reference	Responsibility
Footpaths and ramps throughout LGA	1 -2 years	Service Provider	Undertake review of footpaths and ramps throughout LGA to determine a prioritised approach to implementation of gaps, upgrades and new footpath infrastructure.	Updated and implementation of the Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan considers and prioritises people with disability.	4.2.1.3	Assets
	0-1 year			Updated and implementation of the Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan considers and prioritises people with disability.	1.3.1.6	Strategic Planning
Outdoor spaces and buildings	1 -2 years	Service Provider	Priorise review and audit Council managed outdoor spaces and buildings to determine areas where work is required and priority maintenance areas.	Outdoor spaces and buildings, including access to; are maintained and developed to enable an inclusive community for people with disability.	5.2.1.2	Facilities and Services
	2- 4 years	Service Provider	Implement two liberty swings. Locations to be prioritised in collaboration with Social Planning.	Two liberty swings are installed in appropriate locations so family and carers of people with high needs are able to access recreational opportunities (people in wheelchairs, including adults can experience a sense of freedom)	5.2.1.2	Facilities and Services
Provision of programs and services that support people with a disability	0 – 1 years	Advocate	Develop the Plan of Management to determine and formalise future long term use of the land on which the Ngjoka Centre is located.	The Ngjoka Centre is managed and operated by the Endeavour Foundation by way of license agreement with Port Stephens Council. This arrangement now enables the entire Ngjoka Centre to be utilised for disability services under NDIS.	1.3.1.1	Facilities and Services
	Ongoing	Service Leader	Manage the use of Grahamstown Aquatic Reserve for use by Sailability.	Continuation of Sailability and ongoing access to recreation activities for people with a disability.	1.3.1.2	Community Services
	Ongoing	Service Leader	Ongoing provision of wheel in wheel out garbage bin service (Blue Dot Service) for people with a disability living at home.	The Blue Dot Service	1.3.1.3	Community Services
	Ongoing		Ongoing access to children's services programs for children with additional needs at Outside School Hours Care (Raymond Terrace and Meadowie), Port Stephens Activity Van and Family Day Care.		1.3.1.4	Community Services

Ongoing	Service Provider	Ongoing provision and expansion of assistive and adaptive technology including; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audio read navigators • Zoom text screen reader software • Large print books • Audio books 	Increased awareness and support for people with a disability and increased liveability.	1.3.1.5	Community Services Customer Relations
Public toilets	2 – 4 years	Service Provider	Audit of public toilets to identify locations where adult change facilities for people with a disability are warranted - or where an area could be modified to cater for people with a high need disability during Forward Works Plan.	5.2.1.4	Facilities and Services
		Advocate	Port Stephens disability access toilets are included on the Australian Public Toilet's software application.		
Disability parking spaces throughout the LGA	1 -2 years	Service Provider	Review disability parking spaces as identified to ensure compliance against current standards and / or relocating to meet compliance (via traffic committee).	5.2.1.4	Facilities and Assets
	1 -2 years		At review, update Plans of Management to include discussion of disability parking and, improving accessibility between disability parking, parks and disability accessible toilets.	5.2.1.4	Facilities and Assets
Public transport	1 -2 years	Advocate	Meet with public transport providers to provide feedback from DIAP and address any concerns where possible	1.3.1.6	Strategic Planning
Funding opportunities	Ongoing	Service provider/ Leader	Actively seek grant funding for projects which encourage access and inclusion in the community	5.2.1.4	Facilities and Services Community Development and Engagement Strategic Planning
Accessible events	Ongoing	Service provider / Advocate	Formalise a 12 month trial program of the Event Tent, which promotes and enables greater participation at community events of people and families who have a disability.	2.1.1.5 5.3.1.5 5.4.1.1	Community Development and Engagement Tourism and Events

Improving access to services through better systems and processes

Item for improvement	Priority Timeframe	Council Role	Action	Outcome	IPR Reference	Responsibility
Aligning Action Plan with Integrated Reporting Framework	Ongoing	Leader	Ensure that the DIAP aligns with the Integrated Reporting Framing and that the actions in this Action Plan are included in the (4 year) Delivery Program and the Annual Operational Plan	This plan meets the Local Government DIAP guideline requirements and actions are implemented.	5.3.1.13	Strategic Planning
Information to the public	0 – 1 year	Leader and Service Provider	Enable the ability to provide and receive information to and from the public in a range of formats. Review public exhibition template to make clearer that we accept submissions in all formats, not just written, eg video, voice, recording	More people are able to access information and participate in their local community and the affairs of local government.	5.3.1.6	Office of the General Manager
			Maintain website accessibility (WAAAG) 2.0 AA level			
Policies and procedures	1 -2 years	Leader/Service Provider	Council investigates options to improve understanding of policies and procedures for people with a disability.	Remove obstacles for people with a disability to enable achievement of positive and sustainable employment outcomes.	1.3.1.6	Strategic Planning

Supporting access to meaningful employment

Item for improvement	Priority Timeframe	Council Role	Action	Outcome	IPR Reference	Responsibility
Volunteering processes	1 -2 years	Leader	Review volunteering processes for Port Stephens Council to ensure that they are welcoming of people with disability	Increased access to volunteering opportunities for people with a disability.	1.6.1.3	Community Services
Recruitment processes	Ongoing	Leader	Continue to offer candidates an option to disclose whether or not they have a disability during the application process so that Council are able to ensure that applicants with a disability are and feel supported throughout the process.	Ongoing employment opportunities for people who have a disability with Port Stephens Council.	5.1.4.2	Organisational Development

Attitudes and Behaviours

Item for improvement	Priority Timeframe	Council Role	Action	Outcome	IPR Reference	Responsibility
Education for shop owners/businesses on access issues for people with disability.	0 - 1 year	Advocate	<p>Awareness and education campaigns targeting business owners via Biz Link network, newsletters and business chambers to foster and encourage the following initiatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop companion card friendly initiative which enables free entry to certain venues/events for carers to accompany people with a disability Preferred employer awards for disability accessible workplace 	Outcome is a raised awareness of the needs of people with a disability/ access issues	4.1.2.4	Economic Development
Staff awareness of the needs of people with disability	1-2 years	Advocate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preferred employer awards for disability accessible workplace 		4.1.2.4	Economic Development
Staff awareness of the needs of people with disability	1 -2 years	Leader	To provide training for Council staff on how to work with and understand people with disability through Councils Workplace Equity & Diversity Committee and Guide (attached).	Staff are supported and have greater knowledge of the variety of needs of people with a disability and the need for inclusion	5.1.4.2	Organisational Development

The priority timeframe rating indicates that a High priority should be completed within 1 year, Medium priority within 2 years and Low priority, within 3 to 4 years.

“ Staff are supported and have greater knowledge of the variety of needs of people with a disability and the need for inclusion.”



Governance, monitoring and evaluation

To ensure implementation of the Plan, an internal working group made up of stakeholders who have responsibility for implementing actions with the plan will be ongoing. The working group will meet quarterly to discuss the Action Plan and linkages to both current and future projects and programs including:

- Each new capital works project will consider disability improvements to inclusion and accessibility within the Project Management Plan scoping and procurement document (in addition to Disability Discrimination Act compliance). Improvements for consideration include:
 - Location of the proposed project; and
 - Improvements to carpark access to and from, kerb ramp location and availability and pathway's etc, that enable more seamless connectivity.

Progress of the plan will be monitored and implementation of actions within the Plan will be reported through a range of governance processes, including:

- Six monthly reporting to Councils Executive Leadership team and Council
- Operational Plan annual reporting as part of the Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework
- Annual Report
- End of Term Reporting
- Customer satisfaction annual survey and reporting

To enable effective measurement and monitoring of actions within the plan, the Port Stephens Customer Satisfaction Survey will include a section within the survey of questions that people who experience disability, their families, carers and people who work in the disability sector can elect to answer.



Conclusion

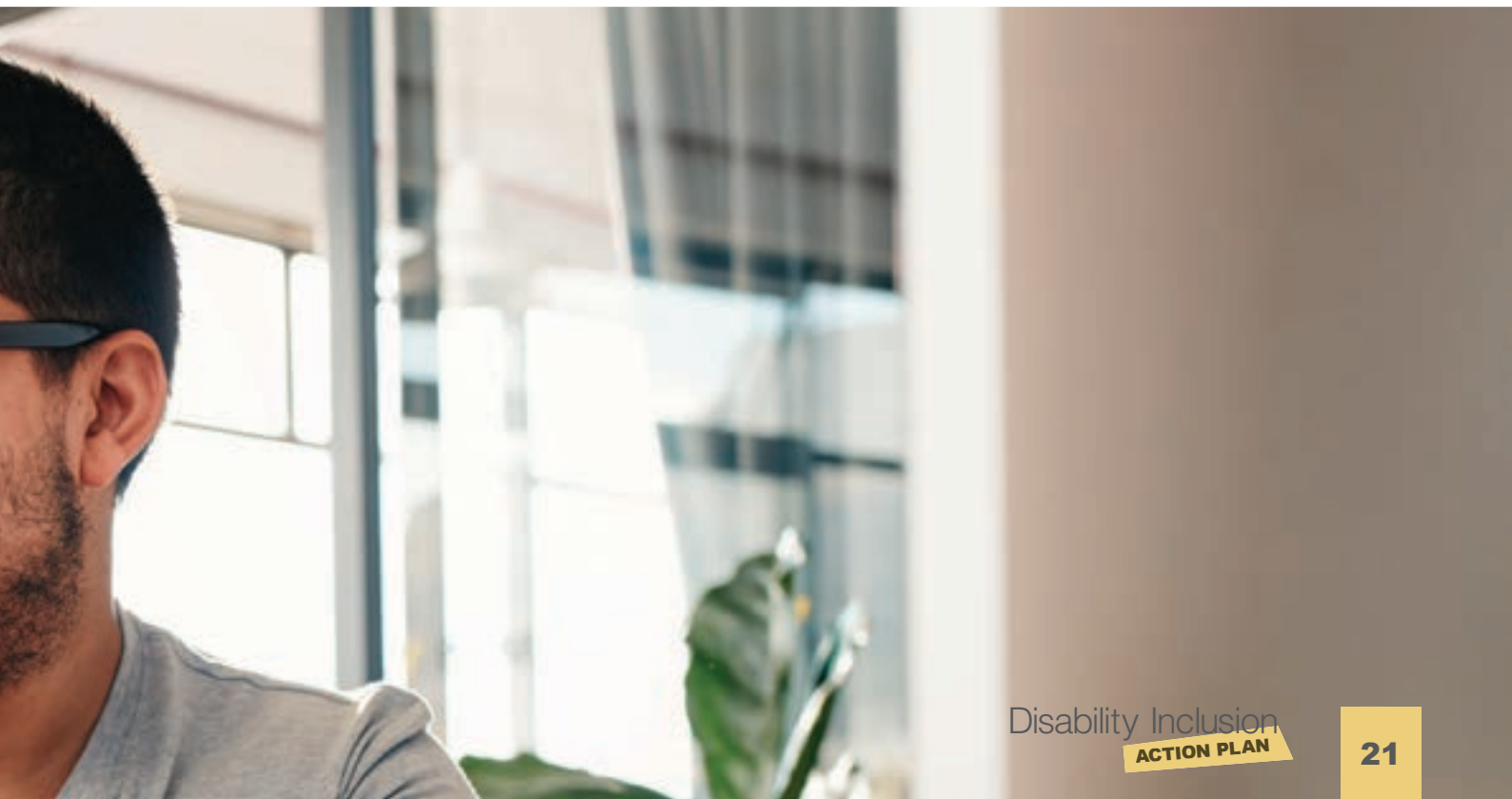
Port Stephens Council has a strong commitment to enhancing life experience of people with a disability in the Local Government Area.

In developing the Disability Inclusion Action Plan, Port Stephens Council has built on the strengths of existing Council resources, Council structure/staff, plans, policies and the local closely connected community by consulting with a broad range of stakeholders.

The priorities identified above reflect Council values and principles. The individual objectives, once approved by Council, are to be included in the 2017-2021 Delivery Program and the Annual Operational Plans for each of those four (4) years. Within the Integrated and Strategic Planning framework, the responsibility, reporting and resourcing for the objectives will be defined.



Draw together diverse interests and strive towards attaining greater consensus on sustainable outcomes for the local government area.



Appendix 1 DIAP Survey

1. What is your age?
2. What suburb do you live in?
(Required)
3. Gender
4. Language used at home?
5. Are you a carer or a person with disability? (Choose all that apply)
 - a. Carer
 - b. Person with disability
 - c. Family member
6. Do you think the Port Stephens Community is welcoming of people with disabilities? Eg businesses, shops etc (Choose all that apply)
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
- 6a. Please give us some examples of positive or negative experiences you have had.
7. Have you encountered any problems, barriers or issues in using transport options? (Choose all that apply).
 - a. Walking or wheelchair use
 - b. Local buses
 - c. Electric Scooter
 - d. Other
- 7a. Please give us some examples of positive or negative experiences you have had.
8. Do you think facilities and services are accessible and inclusive in Port Stephens?
 - a. Council's Administration Building: Yes No
 - b. Community centres: Yes No
 - c. Events: Yes No
 - d. Libraries: Yes No
 - e. Parks: Yes No
 - f. Pools: Yes No
 - g. Other: Yes No
- 8a. Can you give us any examples for improvements?
9. Do you find Council's information publications accessible?
Website: Yes No
Newsletters: Yes No
- 9a. Do you have suggestions for improvements?
10. Would you like to see an improvement in online services through Council's website such as the electronic payment of rates and/or fees and charges?
(Choose all that apply).
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
11. Do you find Council staff at all of its locations and facilities approachable, understanding of your requirements and helpful? (Choose all that apply)
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
- 11a. Please provide details of your experiences with Council staff.
12. Any other comments?



Appendix 2

community consultation

Results from consultation and the survey were framed around the four priority areas for an inclusive community: *Liveable communities, Attitudes and behaviours, Employment and Systems and processes.*

The areas identified for improvement by the Port Stephens community are (in order of priority):

Liveable Communities

Focus Area	Comments
Foot paths/ramps	<p>“Footpaths/ramps – uneven, rough, need ramps to access roads, need lighting on paths and stairs, need more footpaths, wider footpaths, some ramps too steep”.</p> <p>“All new kerb ramps should have no step between the bottom of the ramp and the gutter/road. The small step that is still mostly used at the bottom of curb ramps is completely unnecessary (it doesn’t improve water flow in the gutter as some people think it does), but it makes it harder for a wheelchair user, even if the step is only 2cm or less. The same argument applies to driveways.”</p>
Accessibility to events/activities, shops, sporting facilities, parks.	<p>“Cluttered walkways, access to beaches (wheelchair accessible ramps). Braille on signage, audio description at places of interest, Henderson Park upgrade (steep steps to pontoon, no disability parking), access to pontoons for fishing (Karuah good example of how to do it). Wider access passageways and doorways (e.g. some places have double doors but keep one door locked e.g. Salamander library)”</p>
Provision of venues, services, events	<p>“Lack of disability services in parks (e.g. Liberty swing/swing with 5-point harness), lack of covered areas in parks (many sun-sensitive due to medication, plus rain cover), hydrotherapy pool, fences around parks, disability friendly slide at parks, audio loop needed”.</p> <p>“I would like to see more programs that support carers and the families of people with disabilities in the Port Stephens Local Government Area as their (sic) simply isn’t enough. I would also like more programs to support people with disabilities so that as a community we can start supporting each other through the hardship of living with a disability.”</p>



Focus Area	Comments
Public toilets	<p>“There are lack of amenities in disabled toilets (e.g. adults who need help changing continence aids, hoists in toilets?), need more (e.g. Nelson Bay)”.</p> <p>“Disabled toilets do not cater for older persons with a disability who require nappy changing facilities. It is not nice to change on the floor of a disabled toilet and parents room tables are too small.”</p>
Parking	<p>“There is a lack of disabled parking, some disabled parks are not wheelchair friendly”.</p> <p>“Substandard pavement surfaces for walker frames and mobility scooters. Lack of disability parking spaces at Soldiers Point Boat ramp and Salamander Bay wharf and various other areas within the Port Stephens area.”</p>
Public transport	<p>“Infrastructure improvements for more and better transport, limited timetables, too many transfers to get to destination, want regular community bus (low cost or for free)”.</p>

Attitudes and Behaviours

Focus Area	Comments
Respectful and inclusive community and services	<p>It should be noted that most people reported positive encounters with the public and council staff. One comment stated “could improve empathy and understanding from public on what it is like to have a disability”.</p> <p>“Hearing impaired, when asked to speak slower, shop people yell and pull faces as if trying to mouth out each word, very embarrassing.”</p> <p>“Staring, commenting”.</p>
Public education	<p>“Education for people in shops about disability, disabled amenities/facilities being used by public (change-rooms, toilets, parking) but consideration needed so as not to discriminate against those who do not “appear” to have a disability”:</p>



It should be noted that most people reported positive encounters with the public and council staff.

Employment

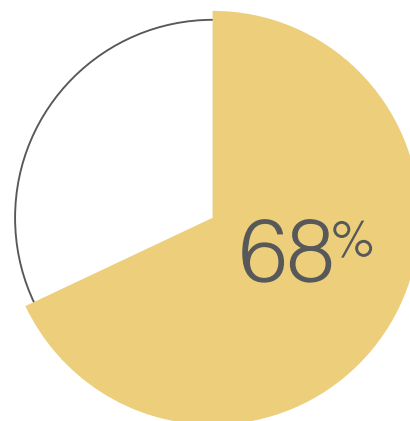
Focus Area	Comments
	<p>No issues identified, however it was acknowledged in internal communication with staff, that Council could lead the way in more employment of people with a disability, this could include recruitment processes which are 'more welcoming' and encourage people to apply for positions. It also was acknowledged that Council policies, procedures, systems and processes could be reviewed for 'easy read' format.</p>

Systems and Processes

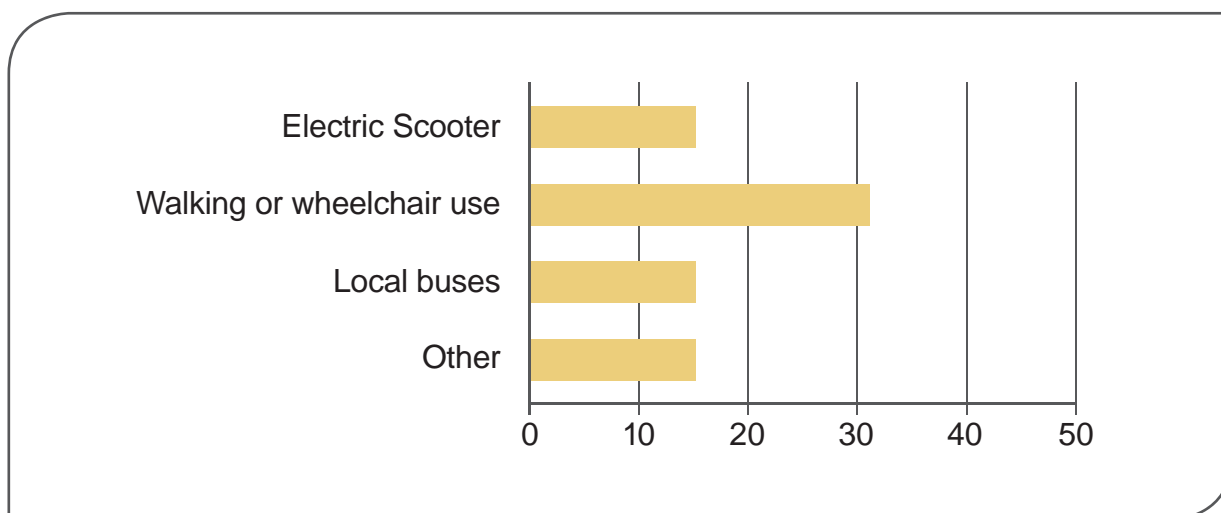
Focus Area	Comments
<p>Range of information dissemination</p>	<p>"Not everyone gets newspaper so send information in other ways (emailed with rates), need to consider information dissemination for people with hearing and vision impaired".</p> <p>"I have rarely seen a Council newsletter. Also, the website needs to be cleaner, clearer, more navigable and user friendly."</p> <p>"Left-aligning text might seem like a visual imposition to the sighted person, but this simple change is the difference between being able to read for people who are blind or who have low vision."</p> <p>"Eye level display for people using wheelchairs."</p>
<p>Promotion and awareness of activities/events/services</p>	<p>Some people were confused or unaware of services/ amenities available to them.</p> <p>In some areas: "For those of us who get their bills via email, it would be great if we were emailed regularly about items on public exhibition etc, to replace what other residents would see in your adds in the Examiner."</p> <p>"More information areas to access help."</p> <p>"Didn't know you had a newsletter."</p>
<p>Consulation on council infrastructure</p>	<p>Respondents welcomed the Council distributing this survey for comment, but others felt more consideration of disability issues was needed.</p> <p>"Planning doesn't seem to include disabled accessibility issues for new projects."</p> <p>"Consideration of people who are blind or low vision in future planning. ie, Braille on all signage (or on poles or mounts for elevated signage). Audio description at places of interest, geographical, cultural or historical significance. Blind people miss out on our beautiful views, they deserve to be catered to with regard to what else PS has to offer. Infrastructure improvements that support more and better public transport to Port Stephens."</p>

Do you think the Port Stephens Community is welcoming of people with disabilities? Eg businesses, shops etc

Most people felt Port Stephens is welcoming (68%).



Have you encountered any problems, barriers or issues in using transport options?

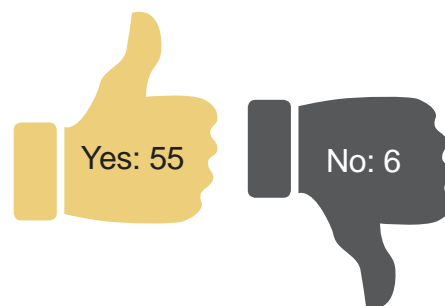


Do you think facilities and services are accessible and inclusive in Port Stephens?

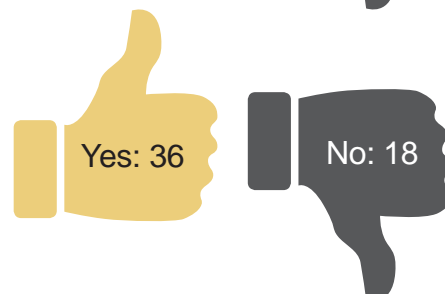
Focus Area	Yes	No
Council's Administration Building	57	6
Community centres	53	8
Events	36	21
Libraries	60	2
Parks	38	27
Pools	43	15
Other	18	13

Do you find Council's information publications accessible?

Focus area: website.

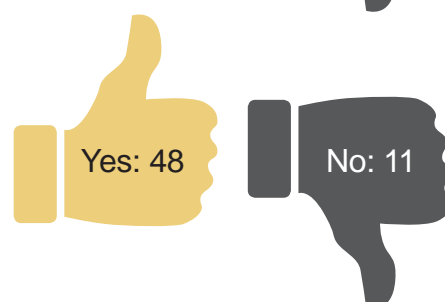


Would you like to see an improvement in online services through Council's website such as the electronic payment of rates and/or fees and charges?



Do you find Council staff at all of its locations and facilities approachable, understanding of your requirements and helpful?

Most comments in this section indicated council staff was very helpful and polite.

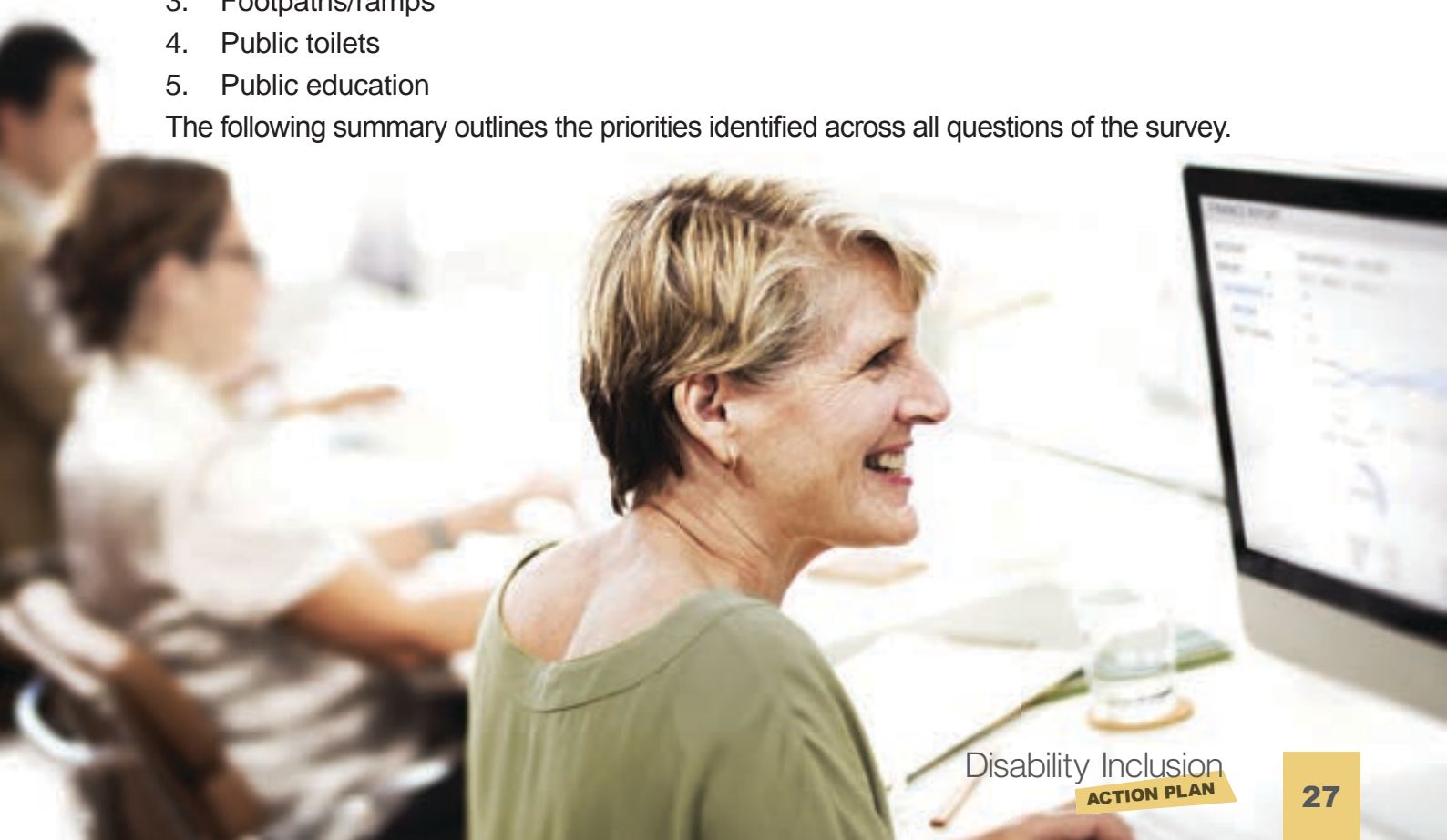


Any other comments?

Items for improvement (in order of priority):

1. Provision of venues, services, events
2. Roads/crossings
3. Footpaths/ramps
4. Public toilets
5. Public education

The following summary outlines the priorities identified across all questions of the survey.



Appendix 3 Functions, services and assets

Function Area: Community Services Sector

Staff / Responsibility structure	Facilities, Provision of Goods or services	Information-Directory	Partners and agency collaboration	Plans and Policies, Brochures, documents	Committees of Council
<p>Resource</p> <p>Manager Community Services</p> <p>Ngjoka Horticultural Therapy Centre</p>	<p>Volunteer workforce of up to 800, provision of 'wheel in wheel out' garbage collection for people with disability living at home. Provision of programs for children with additional needs at Outside of School Hours Care, Childrens' activity Van and Family Day Care. Provision of large print books, talking books and audio and visual navigation aids at libraries. Lear to swim programs at council aquatic centres.</p>	<p>Information on website re volunteers</p> <p>Large text formatting on website</p>	<p>Lease of Grahamstown Aquatic Reserve for use by Sailability. (PSC lease the land from Hunter Water and Sailability sub-lease the land of PSC).</p>	<p>Volunteer strategy Part A and Part B</p>	<p>355 committees</p>
<p>Potential</p>		<p>Links to volunteer resources in other areas/businesses etc.</p> <p>Braille and large font computers</p>	<p>Job agencies, TAFE, universities, schools</p>	<p>Review policies/procedures to ensure they are 'easy read' format.</p> <p>Business leadership to enhance Ngjoka as a multi-purpose centre and to promote and align with NDIS personal plans.</p>	

Function Area: Community Services – Library Services

Staff / Responsibility structure	Facilities, Provision of Goods or services	Information-Directory	Partners and agency collaboration	Plans and Policies, Brochures, documents	Committees of Council
Library Services Manager	<p>Paid Library Staff x 24</p> <p>Casual Library Staff x 11</p> <p>Library Volunteers x 55</p> <p>Assistive/Adaptive technology (Audio Read navigators, Zoom Text screen reader software, large print books, audio books</p>	<p>Information on all Library Services related to services, programs and activities – displayed in branches via (flyers/posters/TV monitors) and on;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facebook, Website • School Newsletters, What's on in our Backyard • PS Examiner • News of the Area (Tea Gardens, Nelson Bay and Medowie) 	<p>Thou Walla Schools as Communities Centre</p> <p>Newcastle Region Library Co-operative</p> <p>Central East Zone (Regional Libraries Group)</p> <p>Public Libraries NSW</p> <p>Hunter WEA</p> <p>Historical and Family History Societies</p> <p>RT Art Space Group</p> <p>Real Futures Foundation</p>	<p>Internet Usage Policy</p> <p>Waiving Overdue Charges</p> <p>Social Media Policy</p> <p>Library User Guidelines</p> <p>PSC Library Brochure</p> <p>Newcastle region Library Brochure</p> <p>Volunteer Position Descriptions and Handbook</p> <p>Historical Society/ Family History Group Agreements</p>	<p>Work Health and Safety Committee</p> <p>WHS Representatives Committee</p> <p>Workplace Equity and Diversity Committee</p> <p>Consultative Committee</p> <p>Heritage Advisory Committee</p>

Resource

“ Disabled toilets do not cater for older persons with a disability who require nappy changing facilities. It is not nice to change on the floor of a disabled toilet and parents room tables are too small.

Function Area: Assets Section

<p>Staff / Responsibility structure</p> <p>Facilities, Provision of Goods or services</p> <p>Information-Directory</p> <p>Partners and agency collaboration</p> <p>Plans and Policies, Brochures, documents</p> <p>Committees of Council</p>
<p>Resource</p> <p>Asset Section Manager</p> <p>Community land management; public toilets; parks, playgrounds, reserves, foreshores, marine access, sporting fields, sports facilities, community buildings, community halls, signage</p> <p>Maintain and upgrade public spaces, facilities, assets and places in line with legislative requirements and community needs</p> <p>Assets register, condition rating system. Opens Space Strategy (underway)</p> <p>Government agencies, grant funding schemes, property developers, community groups, interest groups</p> <p>Various plans of Management (specific and generic), Council policies, Management Directives.</p> <p>Sports Councils, 355 Committees, Community groups, Parks and Reserves Committees</p>
<p>Potential</p> <p>Ensure that the design and construction of new facilities and infrastructure is considerate to limited access community members</p> <p>Ensure that upgrades and maintenance to community facilities are aligned with priorities for inclusion</p> <p>Prepare the Open Space Strategy plans for upgrades to community facilities and areas where infrastructure needs to be considerate of limited access community members</p> <p>Ensure 355 committees consider access and inclusion when thinking about programs</p> <p>Ensure 355 Committees use funds provided by Council to consider access and inclusion when building infrastructure</p> <p>Actively seek grant funding for projects identified within the Opens Space Strategy in order to improve access to inclusion to community facilities and areas throughout the LGA.</p> <p>Review and update existing plans and policies in line with legislative changes and identified needs of the community. Opens Space Strategy (underway)</p> <p>Encourage community groups and committee to undertake projects and programs to encourage access inclusion</p>

Function Area: Human Resource Sector

Staff / Responsibility	Facilities, infrastructure	Provision of Goods or services	Information-Directory	Partners and agency collaboration	Plans and Policies, Brochures, documents	Committees of Council
Resource Manager Human Resources		Recruitment of new staff, Management of staffing (leave, Award provisions, superannuation etc)	Information on website, in hard file and on intra net		Recruitment policy/procedures,	Volunteer 355 Com- mittees
Potential		Recruitment processes to be welcoming of people with disability/older people	Information in range of formats including social media etc Plus help for those who have a disability	Job network agencies, businesses	Recruitment process which is welcoming of people with a disability (advertising which welcomes people with a disability + processes which are not too complex	

Function Area: Environment & Planning/Public Domain and Services

Staff / Responsibility	Facilities, infrastructure	Provision of Goods or services	Information-Directory	Partners and agency collaboration	Plans and Policies, Brochures, documents	Committees of Council
Resource Manager Environment and Planning	Toilets, public spaces (ie parks, sporting fields) and buildings (community halls)	Maintain and upgrade public spaces and places in line with legislation	Assets register Open Spaces strategy	Developers	Public Spaces policy	Urban advisory committee
Potential		Ensure that upgrades to public spaces are aligned with priorities for inclusion	Open Spaces strategy to include upgrades to areas where infrastructure needs to be more inclusive (ie ramps in major halls that are used)			

Function Area: Communications

Staff / Responsibility		Facilities, Provision of Goods or structure services	Information- Partners and agency collaboration	Plans and Policies, Brochures, Council documents	Committees of Council
Resource	Communications Manager	Website, social media, hard copy plans, policies and procedures	Provide information in range of formats to the public	Information on website, Directory on website Large text formatting on website	Communication policy
Potential	Community Development and Engagement Manager			Exhibition Submissions and Grant opportunities Community Development and Engagement partners improvements including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MyLink group • Aboriginal Strategic Community • Youth panel • Business groups • 365 Committees 	



Left-aligning text might seem like a visual improvement to the sighted person, but this simple change is the difference between being able to read for people who are blind or who have low vision.

Function Area: Strategy and Environment

Staff / Responsibility		Facilities, Provision of Goods or infrastructure services		Information- Directory collaboration		Partners and agency Plans and Policies, Brochures, documents		Committees of Council	
Resource	Manager Strategy and Environment	Noxious weed control, landfill	Heritage grants Environmental grants		Landowners/businesses and organisations	Environmental strategies, plans and policies.	Volunteer weed control services 355 Heritage Committee		
Potential			Grant guidelines support projects that encourage access and inclusion						

Function Area: Community Development

Staff / Responsibility		Facilities, Provision of Goods or services infrastructure		Information-Directory		Partners and agency collaboration Brochures, documents		Plans and Policies, of Council Committees	
Resource	Community Development and Engagement Coordinator	355 Advisory Committees Community engagement projects Community development projects	Grant Programs across Council Undertake Council's key community events – Australia Day celebrations, NAIDOC week, Youth week, community awards.	Maintain Council's website Directory	Community Services agencies Community grant awardees	Community Engagement Policy Cultural Plan Youth Strategy	Aboriginal Strategic Committee Strategic Arts Committee Youth Advisory Panel Education and Employment Interagency		
Potential		Council run community events are accessible Grant guidelines support projects that encourage access and inclusion	Strengthen Council's website Directory section on DIAP agencies Ensure 355 committees consider access and inclusion when considering programs Ensure community engagement projects encourage access and inclusion						

Function Area: Civil Assets

Staff / Responsibility		Facilities, infrastructure of Goods or services	Information-Directory	Partners and agency collaboration	Plans and Policies, Brochures, documents of Council Committees	
Resource	Civil Assets Planning Manager	Public transport infrastructure, footpaths, shared paths, kerb ramps	Maintain and upgrade Civil assets and public spaces in line with legislative requirements and community needs.	Assets register, condition rating system	Government agencies, grant funding schemes, property developers, community groups, interest groups	Port Stephens Integrated plans (2016-2026), Strategic Asset Management Plan, The Pathways Plan, Assessment and Maintenance of Footpaths and Cycleways Policy, Bus Shelter Policy, Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport.
Potential	Ensure that the design and construction of new facilities and infrastructure is considerate to limited access community members	Ensure that upgrades and maintenance to civil assets are aligned with priorities for inclusion	Prepare upgrades to civil assets and infrastructure in conjunction with PAMP priority requirements.	Actively seek grant funding for projects identified within the Pathways Plan and PAMP in order to improve access throughout the LGA	Review and update existing plans and policies in line with legislative changes and identified needs of the community	Encourage community groups and committees to undertake projects and programs to encourage access and inclusion



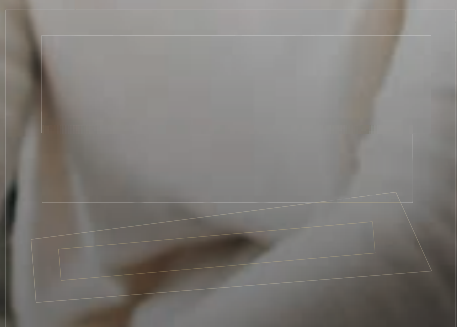
“Planning doesn’t seem to include disabled accessibility issues for new projects.”

Function Area: Community Development

Staff / Responsibility	Facilities, infrastructure	Provision of Goods or services	Information-Directory	Partners and agency collaboration	Plans and Policies, Brochures, documents	Committees of Council
Resource Community Development and Engagement Coordinator	355 Advisory Committees Community engagement projects Community development projects	Grant Programs across Council Undertake Council's key community events – Australia Day celebrations, NAIDOC week, Youth week, community awards.	Maintain Council's website Community Directory	Community Services agencies Community grant awardees	Community Engagement Policy Cultural Plan Youth Strategy	Aboriginal Strategic Committee Strategic Arts Committee Youth Advisory Panel Education and Employment Interagency
Potential		Council run community events are accessible Grant guidelines support projects that encourage access and inclusion	Strengthen Council's website Community Directory section on DIAP agencies Ensure 355 committees consider access and inclusion when considering programs Ensure community engagement projects encourage access and inclusion			

Function Area: General Managers Office

Staff / Responsibility	Facilities, infrastructure	Provision of Goods or services	Partners and agency collaboration	Plans and Policies, Brochures, documents	Committees of Council
Resource Governance Manager	Community Projects grant Ward Funds Mayoral funds				
Potential	Grant guidelines support projects that encourage access and inclusion				Encourage community groups and committees to undertake projects and programs to encourage access and inclusion




PORT STEPHENS
COUNCIL